

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL OPORTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 783

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. SUMMARY. OPORTO WITNESSED IN WEEKEND DEVELOPMENTS PRESS CONFERENCE DEBUT OF NEW SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER PARTY (CDS) SECGEN BASILIO HORTA, TWO LEFTIST RALLIES AND A PAUSE IN POLITICAL BOMBINGS. COMMUNISTS (PCP) AND OTHER FAR LEFTISTS ARE CAPITALIZING ON PAINTING THEMSELVES AS PERSECUTED PARTIES IN CURRENT WAVE OF VIOLENCE AND CONTINUE TO BE CAPABLE OF TURNING OUT LARGE NUMBERS OF SUPPORTERS. END SUMMARY.

2. PCP RALLY. OVER 10,000 TURNED OUT IN OPORTO'S CRYSTAL PALACE JAN 16 TO HEAR LONG-WINDED (ALMOST 1 AND 1/2 HOURS) SPEECH BY PCP SECGEN CUNHAL. RALLY WAS MARKED BY TIGHT SECURITY MAINTAINED BY PCP MILITANTS AND LARGE NUMBER OF CARS SUGGESTING HEAVY PARTICIPATION OF OUT-OF-TOWNERS. CUNHAL IS CLEARLY THE LOVE OF PARTY RANK AND FILE BUT HIS LENGTHY ATTACKS ON CAPITALISTS, INDUSTRIALISTS, LARGE LANDOWNERS AND ALL PARTIES TO THE RIGHT OF PCP BORED MANY LISTENERS. RALLY ENDED WITHOUT INCIDENT.

3. ANTI-FASCIST DEMONSTRATION: VARIOUS WORKERS AND RESIDENT COMMISSIONS ORGANIZED JAN 17 RALLY IN DOWNTOWN OPORTO SQUARE
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TO PROTEST WAVE OF "FASCIST TERROR" AND, IN PARTICULAR, BOMBING

OF LEFTIST SERVICE ORGANIZATION OFFICE (OPORTO 0024, PARA 1).
PRESS REPORTED THAT "THOUSANDS" PARTICIPATED IN RALLY DEVOTED
PRINCIPALLY TO SHOUTING SLOGANS SUCH AS "DEATH TO FASCISM,
AUSTERITY FOR THE BOURGEOIS AND STOP THE RISE IN COST OF LIVING".
DURING SUBSEQUENT MARCH, RALLIERS DEMONSTRATED THEIR OWN
VIOLENCE-PRONE ATTITUDE BY POUNDING WINDOWS OUT OF CAR
ATTEMPTING TO CROSS MARCHERS ON MERCY ERRAND TO HOSPITAL.

4. CDS PRESS CONFERENCE. CDS SECGEN HORTA MADE IMPRESSIVE
DEBUT JAN 17 IN OPORTO HOTEL PRESS CONFERENCE. SENIOR CDS
ORGANIZERS WERE CLEARLY PLEASED WITH ORATORY AND AGILE
INTELLIGENCE OF YOUNG NEW SECGEN. HORTA EMPHASIZED IMPOSSIBIL-
ITY OF ANY POST-ELECTION COALITION WTH THE PCP BECAUSE OF FUNDA-
MENTAL DIFFERENCES EVEN IF PCP STRICTLY ADHERES TO DEMOCRATIC
NORMS. HORTA ALSO STRESSED THE NECESSITY FOR CDS PARTICIPATION
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT EVEN IF THE PARTY WAS IN OPPOSITION AT
NATIONAL LEVEL.
PENNER

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